

2014 Hockey Arbitration Competition of Canada

Derick Brassard v. The New York Rangers

Team 10

Submission on Behalf of The New York Rangers

INTRODUCTION

The following brief outlines the qualities and contributions of Derick Brassard ("Mr. Brassard" or the "Player"); who is a 27 year old, 6' 1", 202lbs left-handed center that has been a member of the New York Rangers (the "Club") for only 93 games as he was recently traded from the Columbus Blue Jackets on April 15, 2013.¹ Mr. Brassard has accumulated the minimum 4 years of professional experience and is thus eligible for salary arbitration pursuant to the requirements of section 12.1 of the National Hockey League *Collective Bargaining Agreement* ("CBA"). It is the Club's respectful submission that a review of the relevant evidence demonstrates that Mr. Brassard is deserving of a salary arbitration award well below the \$5,000,000 midpoint salary. Mr. Brassard is a one-way playmaker, who consistently focuses only on his offense and is also a below-average faceoff taker. The Club submits that he is entitled to an award of \$4,000,000.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Season Performance

Season	Team	GP	G	A	P	+/-	PIM	PPG	SHG	GWG	S	S%	FW	FL
2007-2008	Blue Jackets	17	1	1	2	-4	6	0	0	0	13	7.7	34	46
2008-2009	Blue Jackets	31	10	15	25	12	17	3	0	1	59	17	161	171
2009-2010	Blue Jackets	79	9	27	36	-17	48	4	0	0	125	7.2	210	293
2010-2011	Blue Jackets	74	17	30	47	-11	55	6	0	3	183	9.3	414	474
2011-2012	Blue Jackets	74	14	27	41	-20	42	5	0	3	125	11.2	278	339
2012-2013	Blue Jackets	34	7	11	18	-2	16	1	0	1	63	11.1	215	231
2012-2013	Rangers	13	5	6	11	3	0	2	0	0	25	20		
2013-2014	Rangers	81	18	27	45	2	46	7	0	4	159	11.3	469	508
Career	N/A	403	81	144	225	-37	230	28	0	12	752	10.8	1781	2062

¹ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/news.htm?id=727222>

Mr. Brassard's career statistics illustrate that he is a 3rd line center who contributes only on the offensive end and can be a defensive liability. Mr. Brassard best offensive output was in the 2010-2011 campaign, in which he contributed 17 goals and 30 assists for a career-high 47 points. In his platform year Mr. Brassard played in 81 games and had 45 points and was a +2 player. At 27 years of age, Mr. Brassard has entered in prime and his production of approximately 40-50 points should be expected in his upcoming seasons.

For a player of Mr. Brassard's size, he contributes little to the defensive success of the Club. Mr. Brassard at times can be a physical player; evidenced by his 83 hits during the NHL shortened 2012-2013 season, and 124 hits this past year.² Unfortunately, Mr. Brassard refuses to block shots. During the NHL shortened 2012-2013 season, he blocked a measly 9 shots and similarly, during the 2013-2014 season he only blocked 19 shots.³ Mr. Brassard has shown that he can contribute effectively on the power play; unfortunately, he has not played a major role on any Club's penalty kill. In addition, Mr. Brassard is below average in the faceoff circle. During the 2013-2014 regular season he won only 48.0% of the faceoffs he took, placing him outside the top 30 players in the league for this statistical category.⁴ Throughout his career, Mr. Brassard has won only 46.3% of his faceoffs.⁵

Playoff Performance

Season	Team	GP	G	A	P	+/-	PIM	PPG	SHG	GWG	S	S%	FW	FL
2012-2013	Rangers	12	2	10	12	1	2	1	0	1	22	9.1	82	82
2013-2014	Rangers	23	6	6	12	4	8	0	0	2	45	13.3	158	177

²<http://www.nhl.com/ice/playerstats.htm?fetchKey=20142ALLSASALL&sort=blockedShots&viewName=rtssPlayerStats>

³ *Ibid.*

⁴<http://www.nhl.com/ice/playerstats.htm?gameType=2&position=S&season=20132014&sort=faceOffWinPctg&stats=A&viewName=faceOffPercentage>

⁵ *Supra* note 1.

Playoff Totals	N/A	35	8	16	24	5	10	1	0	3	67	11.9	240	259
-----------------------	------------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	----------	----------	----------	-----------	-------------	------------	------------

Mr. Brassard has very little playoff experience for someone who has been in the league for 7 seasons. Over the course of 12 games during the 2012-2013 playoff campaign he produced 12 points and won 50% of his faceoffs. During the 2013-2014 playoffs, Mr. Brassard contributed 12 points in 23 games but lost 52.8% of his faceoffs. During the same playoff season, he was a respectable +4 while averaging 15:47 of ice time.⁶ In short, Mr. Brassard has demonstrated that his playoff performance mirrors his regular season performance, but he has not shown the ability to increase his production during the high intensity of the NHL playoffs.

GAMES PLAYED & INJURY HISTORY

Mr. Brassard has featured in a total of 403 regular season NHL games. He has also been featured in a total of 35 playoff games. Mr. Brassard has demonstrated a propensity to injury, a fact that cannot be overlooked in determining his future reliability and durability. Throughout his career, Mr. Brassard has suffered multiple injuries to his right shoulder. In his 2006 while playing for the Drummondville Voltigeurs in the QMJHL, Mr. Brassard dislocated his right shoulder and ended up only playing 14 games that season.⁷ In 2007 while playing for the Columbus Blue Jackets' farm team, Mr. Brassard broke his jaw which caused him to miss two months.⁸ During the 2008-2009 NHL season Mr. Brassard again dislocated his right shoulder which required surgery and caused him to miss the remainder of the season (50 regular season and 4 playoff games).⁹ Although Mr. Brassard has played in an overwhelming majority of games since the 2008-2009 NHL season, he has suffered three serious injuries that would give any Club attempting to sign him cause for concern. The most troubling issue for the Club is that Mr.

⁶<http://www.nhl.com/ice/playerstats.htm?season=20132014&gameType=2&team=NYR&position=S&country=&status=&viewName=summary>

⁷ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?5025>

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

Brassard has suffered two dislocations to his right shoulder that caused him to miss significant time. Since shoulder injuries are often reoccurring, it is the Club's position that it is reasonable to assume that Mr. Brassard is likely to reinjure his right shoulder causing him to miss significant time moving forward.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

Mr. Brassard was selected 6th overall in the first round of the 2006 NHL entry draft by the Columbus Blue Jackets.¹⁰ Mr. Brassard featured in 4½ NHL regular season games for the Columbus Blue Jackets and 42 regular season games for the Blue Jackets' AHL affiliate. Mr. Brassard was traded to the New York Rangers during the 2012-2013 season at the trade deadline.¹¹ Since then, Mr. Brassard has featured in only 94 games for the New York Rangers. Mr. Brassard has spent the majority of his career with the Columbus Blue Jackets and is still adjusting to the pressures of playing for a premier franchise such as the New York Rangers.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMPETITIVE SUCCESS OF THE CLUB

Mr. Brassard has only featured in the playoffs on 2 occasions. During his time as a member of the Columbus Blue Jackets, the team secured a playoff berth only once, during the 2008-2009 season, which was the season in which Mr. Brassard missed the last 50 games with his shoulder injury. The 94 games in which Mr. Brassard has been a member of the Club they have made the playoffs both times. The Club finished 5th in the Eastern Conference during the 2013-2014 season with a record of 45-31-6.¹² Mr. Brassard played a role in the Club's reaching the NHL Finals during the 2013-2014 playoff campaign, by contributing 12 points in 23 games which ranked 23rd overall in the NHL.¹³

¹⁰ *Supra* note 1.

¹¹ *Supra* note 7.

¹² <http://www.nhl.com/ice/standings.htm?season=20132014&type=DIV#&navid=nav-stn-div>

¹³ *Supra* note 1.

SPECIAL QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP & PUBLIC APPEAL

Mr. Brassard has been a model citizen during his time in the NHL. However, during his 7 year career Mr. Brassard has never been chosen as a captain or even an alternate captain. Despite his obvious skill, Mr. Brassard needs to take a more active role in the leadership of the team especially due to the loss of many team leaders this past year.

COMPARABLE PLAYERS, PERFORMANCE & COMPENSATION

In order for an arbitrator to properly assess an adequate award for a player in arbitration, comparable players must be examined in order to determine salary benchmarks for players of similar skill.¹⁴ The following players used as comparables were arbitration eligible at the end of the 2013-2014 NHL season. Nick Bonino, Ryan O'Reilly and Tyler Ennis serve as the most comparable players for Mr. Brassard. For the purposes of comparison, salary numbers will be discussed in terms of Average Annual Value (AAV).

Table 1. Contractual Background of Comparable Players¹⁵

Player	Age	Team	Signing Date	AAV of Contract (\$)
Derick Brassard	27	New York Rangers	TBD	TBD
Nick Bonino	26	Anaheim Ducks	November 28, 2013	1,900,000 (3 yr contract)
Ryan O'Reilly	23	Colorado Avalanche	July 23, 2014	6,000,000 (2 yr contract)
Tyler Ennis	24	Buffalo Sabres	July 17, 2014	4,600,000 (5 yr contract)

Table 2. Career Statistics (excluding Platform Year)¹⁶

Player	GP	G (G/GP)	A (A/GP)	P(P/GP)	+/-	PIM (PIM/GP)	SOG	SOG %
Derick Brassard	322	63(0.20)	117(0.36)	180(0.56)	-39	184(0.57)	593	11.0
Nick Bonino	112	11(0.10)	22(0.20)	33(0.29)	-4	26(0.23)	137	8.0
Ryan O'Reilly	265	45(0.17)	82(0.31)	127(0.48)	-7	50(0.19)	509	8.8
Tyler Ennis	187	48(0.26)	65(0.35)	123(0.66)	-2	66(0.35)	423	11.3

¹⁴ NHL Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), 2005, s.12.9(g)(ii)(A)-(G).

¹⁵ <http://www.capgeek.com/>

¹⁶ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/playerstats.htm>

I. Nick Bonino

Table 3. Platform Year Statistical Comparison¹⁷

Player	GP	G (G/GP)	A (A/GP)	P(P/GP)	+/-	PIM (PIM/GP)	SOG	SOG %
Derick Brassard	81	18(0.22)	27(0.33)	45(0.56)	+2	64(0.79)	159	11.3
Nick Bonino	77	22(0.29)	27(0.35)	49(0.64)	+14	22(0.29)	159	13.8

Nick Bonino and Mr. Brassard had similar offensive outputs in their respective platform season. Nick Bonino and Mr. Brassard played in almost the same number of games, had the same amount of assists, shots and their P/GP varied by only 0.08P/GP. Nick Bonino had a much better +/-, was more disciplined and had a better shot efficiency (see Table 3). Both players are also both below average faceoff takers, a 48.8% win percentage for Nick Bonino vs. 48.0% for Mr. Brassard (this past season).¹⁸ Each player averaged similar ice-times during their platform year, (16:14 for Nick Bonino compared to 15:48 for Mr. Brassard).¹⁹

The Vancouver Canucks have committed to paying Nick Bonino an AAV of \$1,900,000. Nick Bonino and Mr. Brassard are similar players, evidenced by their similar offensive statistics, age and role on their respective team. Nick Bonino is relatively underpaid in comparison to his performance. This may be due to his short tenure in the NHL and the possible devaluation by the Anaheim Ducks (the team who signed him), as he was recently traded to the Vancouver Canucks.²⁰ However, as it currently stands there is no metric in which Mr. Brassard is worth a contract almost triple that of Nick Bonino. Given Mr. Brassard's longer track-record, it would be consistent the Club to offer Mr. Brassard a salary that is at least twice that of the undervalued Nick Bonino. Therefore, it is submitted that an award of \$4,000,000 for Mr. Brassard is justified.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/playerstats.htm?fetchKey=20142ALLSASALL&viewName=faceOffPercentage&sort=faceOffWinPctg&pg=2>

¹⁹ <http://www.nhl.com/ice/playerstats.htm?gameType=2&position=S&season=20132014&sort=timeOnIce&status=A&viewName=timeOnIce>

²⁰ <http://forecaster.thehockeynews.com/hockeynews/hockey/player.php?6243>

II. Ryan O'Reilly

Table 4. Platform Year Statistical Comparison²¹

Player	GP	G (G/GP)	A (A/GP)	P(P/GP)	+/-	PIM (PIM/GP)	SOG	SOG %
Derick Brassard	81	18(0.22)	27(0.33)	45(0.56)	+2	64(0.79)	159	11.3
Ryan O'Reilly	80	28(0.35)	36(0.45)	64(0.80)	- 1	2(0.03)	201	13.9

Ryan O'Reilly had a far superior offensive output in his platform season. Ryan O'Reilly and Mr. Brassard played in almost the same number of games, but Ryan O'Reilly had 10 more goals, 9 more assists and his shot efficiency was greater by 2.6%. Both players had similar +/- in their respective platform seasons, however, up to last season Mr. Brassard was an abysmal -39 compared to Ryan O'Reilly's respectable -7 (see Table 2 and Table 4). Ryan O'Reilly also had increased responsibilities on his team as a 2nd line center as evidenced by his increased ice-time in comparison to Derick Brassard who was only a 3rd line center this past season (19:49 for Ryan O'Reilly compared to 15:48 for Mr. Brassard).²²

The Colorado Avalanche have committed to paying Ryan O'Reilly an AAV of \$6,000,000. This past season Ryan O'Reilly proved to be a better offensive player than Mr. Brassard. Due to the fact that Ryan O'Reilly is 3 years younger, has demonstrated that he is a more explosive offensive player and has increased responsibilities as a 2nd line center, it would be inconsistent for the Club to offer Mr. Brassard a salary that is similar to the one given to Ryan O'Reilly. Therefore, it is submitted that an award of \$4,000,000 for Mr. Brassard is justified.

III. Tyler Ennis

Table 5. Platform Year Statistical Comparison²³

Player	GP	G (G/GP)	A (A/GP)	P(P/GP)	+/-	PIM (PIM/GP)	SOG	SOG %
--------	----	-------------	-------------	---------	-----	-----------------	-----	----------

²¹ *Supra* note 16.

²² *Supra* note 19.

²³ *Supra* note 16.

Derick Brassard	81	18(0.22)	27(0.33)	45(0.56)	+2	64(0.79)	159	11.3
Tyler Ennis	80	21(0.26)	22(0.28)	43(0.54)	-25	42(0.53)	210	10.0

Tyler Ennis and Mr. Brassard had similar offensive outputs in their respective platform season. Tyler Ennis and Mr. Brassard had similar goals and assists, and their P/GP varied by only 0.02P/GP. Tyler Ennis has had a better +/- over his career, but this past season was an uncharacteristically low year for Tyler Ennis with a -25 (see Table 2). Tyler Ennis averaged more ice-time than Mr. Brassard this past season, (18:51 for Tyler Ennis compared to 15:48 for Mr. Brassard)²⁴, however, Mr. Brassard has the increased responsibility of taking faceoffs as a center whereas Tyler Ennis plays on the left wing.

The Buffalo Sabres have committed to paying Tyler Ennis an AAV of \$4,600,000. Over his career Tyler Ennis has demonstrated to be a better and more explosive offensive player than Mr. Brassard. Although Tyler Ennis does not have the responsibilities of a center, he averages significantly more ice-time than Mr. Brassard and is also 3 years younger. Tyler Ennis' contract reflects the fact that he is a young emerging star in the NHL with massive amounts of potential who will only get better as he gains more experience in the league. Therefore, it would be inconsistent for the Club to offer Mr. Brassard a salary that is similar to the one given to Tyler Ennis. Therefore, it is submitted that an award of \$4,000,000 for Mr. Brassard is justified.

CONCLUSION

The Club respectfully submits that on the basis of his career performance, defensive inconsistencies, contribution to the overall success of the team and injury history, that Mr. Brassard should be awarded a salary that does not exceed an AAV of \$4,000,000. This value is appropriate considering Mr. Brassard's career performance in relation to the comparable players outlined above.

²⁴ *Supra* note 19.